AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Previously presented) A node in an Ethernet network to relay an Ethernet frame, comprising:

an element which inserts two or more VLAN tags into said frame and removes another said inserted VLAN tag in a relay process of said frame.

2.   (Previously presented) A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

an element which replaces two or more VLAN tags of said frame at a time.

3.   (Previously presented) A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

an element which administrates said two or more VLAN tags using a forwarding table memory for a change of frame contents during a frame relay.

4.   (Previously presented) A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

an element which searches a forwarding table memory using an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame during a frame relay.

5.   (Previously presented) A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

an element which searches a forwarding table memory in a relay process of said frame with a combination of an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame and an input port, a destination MAC address, a source MAC address and a TYPE field information.

6.   (Previously presented)   A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising an element

which:

provides a TTL area to show a survival time of a frame in said VLAN tag inserted to

said frame;

checks whether said survival time has elapsed or not by a value in said TTL area; and

discards said frame after elapse of said survival time without relaying said frame in a

relay process of said frame.

7.   (Previously presented)   A node as set forth in claim 6, further comprising:

an element which decrements the value in said TTL area by one every time said frame

is relayed.

8.   (Currently amended)   A node as set forth in claim 1, wherein

~~node~~ network control information is stored to said VLAN tag, said network control

information not restricted to a 64-byte minimum frame size restriction of network control

information, as defined by a standard of said Ethernet.

9.   (Previously presented)   A node as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

an element which changes a self-node status administration corresponding to a

content of said VLAN tag.

10.   (Previously presented)   A node as set forth in claim 1, wherein

a node status is stored to an area of said VLAN tag in the relayed frame corresponding

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to a self-node status.

11.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method of a node to relay an Ethernet frame,

said method comprising:

receiving an Ethernet frame in said node;

inserting two or more VLAN tags to said Ethernet frame at a time or removing said

inserted VLAN tags; and

forwarding said Ethernet frame.

12.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein

a forwarding table memory for frame contents change during a frame relay is used for

administration of said two or more VLAN tags.

13.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein

a forwarding table memory is searched during a frame relay using an information

from two or more VLAN tags in said frame.

14.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein

a forwarding table memory is searched in a relay process of said frame with a

combination of an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame and an input port,

a destination MAC address, a source MAC address and a TYPE field information.

15.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein:

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a TTL area to show a survival time of the frame is provided in said VLAN tag that is

inserted to said frame;

whether said survival time has been elapsed or not is checked by a value in said TTL

area; and

said frame after elapse of said survival time is discarded without being relayed in the

relay process of said frame.

16.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 15, wherein

the value in said TTL area is decremented by one every time said frame is relayed.

17.   (Currently amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein

~~a node~~ network control information is stored to said VLAN tag, said network control

information not restricted to a 64-byte minimum frame size restriction of network control

information, as defined by a standard of said Ethernet.

18.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, further

comprising:

changing a self-node status administration corresponding to contents of said VLAN

tag.

19.   (Previously presented) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim 11, wherein

a node status is stored to said VLAN tag area in the relayed frame corresponding to a

self-node status.

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20. (New) The node of claim 8, wherein said network control information comprises 32-bit network control tags.